

Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

When "The Plowman Shall Overtake the Reaper"

GOD WILL NOT TAKE SECOND PLACE

IN TRAINING

QUALITY AND QUANTITY BLOSSOMS

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

O THOU ETERNAL

Megiddo Message

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Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

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- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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Dear Friend,

We are happy to have you to carry on the preaching of the Bible which has been unfolded by the founder of the Megiddo Mission Church, which he has obtained from God—so much wisdom.

May God grant us to profit by the knowledge which he left us.

Be assured of our gratitude.
Windsor, Ont.

C. T.

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Dear Friend,

Your magazine is such a blessing to me. I look forward to its arrival. May it prove a blessing to my loved ones. I save all of your magazines and take them to the Veterans' Hospital.

Rockwood, Mich.

Mrs. H. H. M.

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Dear Brother:

For many years I have been studying your literature and it has satisfied all my desires for knowledge of the Bible as the Word of God. I have studied much other literature before and since I have come across yours, but none has brought the satisfaction in its truth about the Word of God.

Brunswick, Maine

Mrs. M. L.

When "The Plowman Shall Overtake the Reaper"

THE SYSTEM of fitting the land, and sowing the seed for a grain or garden crop, is as old as civilization. However the methods of accomplishing this have been greatly improved over the years. Among primitive peoples the ox and the wooden plow are still in use as the major means by which the soil is prepared for planting, and in different parts of the earth improved methods of all shades and grades may be found, the last word today, perhaps, being the tractor-powered rotary tiller, which in one operation can pulverize the ground twelve or more inches deep, leaving it in perfect condition for planting.

Cereal grains, legumes, leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, still are planted in field or garden, and while these have not been improved to the same extent that farm machinery has been improved, yet through agricultural and horticultural research, these too have been noticeably improved. However the fact of seedtime and harvest have not changed. To secure a crop the farmer must prepare his land at the suitable time of the year; he must sow his seed, and harvest the ripened crop.

Our thought from Scripture reading (Amos 9), emphasizes the *order* of the well-known steps of husbandry, and to impress a lesson reverses that order. "The plowman shall overtake the reaper." Here is something that is unusual, exceptional, plowing before the food crop is harvested. Sometimes that process is employed today as in the case of plowing under a crop to add humus to the soil; however that usually is done before the food crop is ripe enough to harvest. It is obvious that in using this simile the herdsman prophet was employing symbolism, a practice very common among the peoples of the East. And, as a spokesman for the Eternal, he certainly was teaching a lesson which would apply to some feature of God's plan and purpose on this earth, His plan for the salvation of mankind.

In the Bible, God, as the Great Husbandman, is represented as maintaining a field, a vineyard, a garden. In Jesus' parable of Matthew 20, God is represented as going out "early in the morning," in the "third," "sixth," "ninth," and "eleventh" hours, to hire laborers into His vineyard. Isaiah specifies that this vineyard is the "house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant." And Paul, addressing the Church at Corinth, said, "Ye are God's . . . husbandry."

The Eternal, being as He is, a God of order, we could expect no less of the Great Husbandman than perfect order in His activities. And indeed, orderly they are. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Using the discretion of the alert farmer as an example of His own discretion, God, through Isaiah, relays the following message: "Is a ploughman always ploughing, always harrowing up the soil? Once the field is smooth and level, does he not scatter fennel seed and cummin, planting wheat and barley, with vetches on the border,

guided aright by the Eternal, prompted by his God? . . . bread-corn is not ground to pieces, no one threshes it for ever, but, once the cart-wheel passes o'er it, we spread it out instead of crushing. 'Tis the Eternal who this lore supplies, so great a Guide, so wonderfully wise." (Isa. 28: 24—26, 28, 29, Moffatt). In our common version, the 29th verse reads: "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." The reaping must follow the sowing.

The Seed, the Word of God

Carrying the spiritual analogy still further, God sows the Word of life in our hearts. Jesus likened the Word of God to the good seed of the Kingdom. It was sown in soils of varying qualities, and in the aforementioned parable of the husbandman, over different periods of the Day of Salvation. Let us examine Jesus' parable of the Sower. A sower went forth to sow his seed, and his seed fell into four kinds of soil, the "wayside," upon a "rock," among "thorns," on the "good ground." These terms symbolize varying human qualities, the last of the four, the "good ground," representing the "honest and good" hearts.

The Harvest

But God will not always be sowing. For all things there is a time and place. The time will come when He will "reap the fruit of the earth." We read in Rev. 14: 14, 15: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe."

This is God's plan, and it is revealed many times throughout the Word. In Galatians 6, a slightly different approach is used to picture the sowing and reaping. Jesus said the "field is the world," the "reapers are the angels"; but in that mighty field every servant of God has a plot for his individual work, sowing, tilling, harvest. In Gal. 6, Paul states the immutable principle: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." The responsibility is shifted from God, to ourselves. In fact, the two are always involved. The sowing of the seed in our hearts is God's responsibility, but its germination, growth, and the soil condition is our own, and Paul here symbolizes this latter process as "sowing." But once the seed is sown, and we have entered into covenant with God, we cannot escape the reaping.

With God, enlightenment always brings responsibility. He doesn't provide men and women with His saving

knowledge merely for them to take it or leave it at their caprice. Jesus revealed this precept when He said: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin" (John 15:22). Paul impressed the same truth by inference in II Cor. 5:10, when, in speaking of the covenant makers he employed the term, "we": "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." And again in Rom. 14:12: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." "Every one of us," each member of the corporate body of believers must experience the sensation of the reaping, must feel the keen edge of the reaper's sickle in that we shall be summoned before Him for judgment. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body . . . whether it be good or bad." Herein lies a thought-provoking truth. The good seed or Word of God has been sown in our hearts. It is ours to till and cultivate with concern for the harvest. The Lord of the vineyard will give full pay for only fully matured fruit and that in full measure (John 15:8).

Two Plowings, Two Reaping Times

The Bible definitely pictures two groups of people who are to share the felicities of bliss in God's Kingdom upon earth: the ruling group, or "kings and priests," as we read in Rev. 5:10; and the subjects, or great body of people who are to compose the populace of the earth, thus filling it with His glory, when at the close of the seven-thousand-year day of salvation, it rolls forth from the hand of the Creator as His finished handiwork. We shall go into more detail a little further on.

In Revelation 14 two reaping times are pictured: the harvest of the firstfruits, then afterward the harvest of the "clusters of the vine of the earth." In verses 14 and 15, already quoted, the angel that sat on the cloud cast in his sickle, and the earth was reaped. This obviously was the harvest of the firstfruits, not the harvest of the entire crop. This phenomenon was followed by the appearance of another angel carrying a sharp sickle, and he was commanded: "Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth." This the harvest of the bountiful afterfruits. (vs. 18, 19).

To the casual reader these two events might seem to be contemporaneous, but they are not, they are a thousand years apart. Revelation 20 provides this specific information. The faithful members among those of the "first resurrection,"—literally speaking, the first in rank, the chief resurrection—are to live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. The "rest of the dead," those who will have lived and died during the thousand years, will not live again until the thousand years are finished, and they will compose the afterfruits, the "clusters" of the vine of the earth.

The Plowman Overtakes the Reaper

The foregoing brings us one step nearer to a solution of our problem about the plowman overtaking the reaper. At present we find ourselves working to a deadline, even though that deadline is not known to us. The coming of Christ will signal the close of one grand division of

God's plan for the earth. One crop of plants for His heavenly kingdom will have reached the harvest stage, and immediately work will begin on preparing the soil for the next planting. This procedure coincides perfectly with the accepted plan for farming, hence would not be out of the ordinary. Where then does the novelty of the plowman overtaking the reaper, fit in?

Let us give further thought to the fact of a deadline. As long as the gospel of the kingdom is being preached some will continue to be attracted by the call, and will start in the race for life. But at some point in the passing of years, the remaining time (until Christ appears and terminates the day of salvation for the first group) will be insufficient for the late entrants to complete their race, hence they will automatically become a part of the after-crop that is to be produced during the Millennial Age.

Here then is the answer to the enigma of the plowman overtaking the reaper.

While some of the latest-sown crops for the first harvest, are maturing, the ground is being broken, and seed is being sown that cannot mature until after Christ (the Plowman—Reaper) returns to earth, with the result, the plowing overtakes the reaping. This event was foreshown when Jacob placed his hands upon the heads of both sons of Joseph at the same time, the two lads symbolizing two groups of people, rulers and subjects in Christ's kingdom, as we shall show later.

The Over-all Plan

To explain more fully the foregoing steps of God's plan, we will go into more detail. We find in the Bible that God purposed to take out a people to fill the earth with His glory, and allotted seven thousand years in which to accomplish this work. The plan is foreshadowed in the allegory of Creation in Genesis, in which God is represented as working for six days, and resting from His labors on the seventh. Peter informs us that a day with the Lord is as a thousand years, hence, six, thousand-year days, to be followed by a seventh day of rest, also of a thousand years in length.

He purposed, and outlined, in His grand plan that during the six thousand years He would take out a righteous people to be co-rulers with His Son, Jesus Christ, in His kingdom. And as such they would have to endure greater trials and testings than those who should attain righteousness during the seventh or Millennial Day. In keeping with God's divine sense of justice, the former group by reason of merit should receive greater reward than the latter, who perfect their character under much less strenuous circumstances. God revealed His plan through the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles. And it is for us to familiarize ourselves with, and accept, the details of this plan, so far as they are revealed.

We read in Romans 15:4: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." In Rom. 4:11, Paul informs us that Abraham was called to be the father of all who believe, that is of all the faithful believers. In the days of Jesus the natural Jews thought they were the privileged children of Abraham, but Jesus did not agree with them. He showed the falseness of their claim and left them without a prop to lean on when He said: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). It is only those who walk in the footsteps of Abraham

that are accounted as his children. He is the father of all them that believe. And again in Gal. 3:29 Paul tells us, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." If ye be Christ's then what are you? then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise, otherwise you are not.

Two Seeds

We read in Gen. 17:7 of God's promise to Abraham, "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." Abraham was to have this earth for an everlasting possession if he walked before God and became perfect. And that is the promise we have. Jesus gave it in Matt. 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

We read further in Genesis 17, "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be,"—that is, the mother of the faithful. "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations,"—the mother of those who believe—"kings of people shall be of her," (vs. 15, 16). All the faithful of this six-thousand-year period who do the work, have the promise of Rev. 2:26, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." Christ is coming to take the reins of government into His own hands, and He has promised that all the faithful of this six-thousand-year day of probation, shall be kings and priests with Him.

Now, this is one seed promised to Abraham, but that was not all. There was to be another seed, the subjects or populace of the kingdom. We read: "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!" And God said: "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; . . . and I will make him a great nation." Two seeds were promised to Abraham, one seed to be taken out for rulers, and the other seed to be taken out as the subjects of the kingdom. Here we have two different sets of plants growing in two different aspects of God's husbandry, and in two different ages.

Earlier, we alluded to the account of Jacob blessing Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, and pointed out that they typified two classes of people. In Genesis 49 we have the account of Jacob's blessing his sons, and the first verse reveals that the prophecy was long-range. "Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." In the chapter before we have the account of Jacob's blessing his two grandsons, Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's sons, and that too was long-range.

We read: "And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who are these?" He asked that question because his eyes were dim with age, he could not see well. But his perception was not dimmed, he was blessed with divine foresight, and could forecast future events. He knew the divine plan, and the relation of the one to the other of the two groups of people his two grandsons typified. So Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place. And he said, Bring

them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them. Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age, so that he could not see. And he brought them near unto him; and he kissed them, and embraced them . . . And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him. And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn" (vs. 8—10, 13, 14). It was customary for the chief blessing to go to the firstborn. Jacob knew what he was doing when he crossed his arms placing his right hand on Ephraim's head, who was the younger. It was known to him that the elder, or greater in *number*, should serve the younger, who would be greater in *rank*.

"And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him: and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head." Joseph thought that his father, being old, did not know what he was doing, and attempted to straighten him out. But Jacob was adamant. He said: "I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations. And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh" (vs. 17—20).

You see Ephraim represents this seed who are going to be rulers. Ephraim was going to be the greater in rank, but Manasseh will be the greater in number. He will be numberless. Those who work out their salvation during this six-thousand-year day of probation, when greater trials must be endured, will be greater in God's sight than those who live during the Millennial Age, when the forces of evil are kept under constant control, making the work of moral perfection comparatively easier.

The same arrangement prevailed in the relation between Jacob and Esau, the elder should serve the younger. Paul observes this arrangement in Rom. 9:12. Before the birth of Esau and Jacob, it was said to Rebecca: "The elder shall serve the younger," or as it is rendered in the margin, "the greater shall serve the lesser."

The inheritors of paradise are definitely divided into two groups; rulers and subjects; and as the spiritual offspring of our father Abraham, they may be termed the seed of Isaac and Ishmael.

Jesus Himself was familiar with this divine arrangement as He showed when He said: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16). Again in Rev. 7:9, and 13—15: Jesus referred to the great number that will form the "clusters" of the earth, also revealing their rank. He *first* pictures the sealing or stamping with the mark of approval the 144,000 firstfruits as twelve thousand from each of the twelve spiritual tribes of Israel, and then follows a description of the *second* and *larger* group: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands . . . And one of the elders answered, saying

(Continued on page 9)

All Wrapped Up?

The following, sent to us by a friend, from some religious publication, is good enough to pass along to our friends.

WHILE IRONING an apron the other day I found a tightly crumpled handkerchief in the pocket. Though it had been through the wash, the hankie was not clean because the water had not been able to flow through it freely.

This little incident brought home a spiritual illustration to me. It is easy for us to become wrapped up in our own affairs. How quickly the mind can wander while the pastor is preaching—"What kind of salad should I have for dinner. . . . Johnnie must have a nap today. . . . I wonder if we'll have company this afternoon. . . . Oh, there is Mrs. Brown, how nice to see her in church. . . ." "Let this mind be in you. . . ." "Oh, yes, the sermon!"

Has it ever happened to you?

And, while we are singing, "If Jesus goes with me, I'll go anywhere," perhaps our thoughts are miles away, not on a quest for souls, but at our favorite resort or picnic area.

What about personal or family devotions? Have you ever tried to pray when you were so sleepy that devotion time became a rest period? Or, while reading the Word is the mind focused on the next household chore?

God desires to have the cleansing water of His Word flow through our hearts both in His sanctuary and at home when we are alone with Him, but if we, though "in the wash," are wrapped up in ourselves like that little hankie, the moments of blessing will fail to have the best possible effect in our lives. May God keep us from being wrapped up in the apron pocket of our own activities! —Mabel Olson.



O How I Love His Law

God's Word is so pure and so precious to me,
His precepts I love and adore;
A lamp to my feet and a light to my path
Till pilgrimage days are no more.

How peaceful and pleasant the ways of the Lord,
When under the Saviour's control;
The Word that He speaketh is spirit and life,
Refreshing and sweet to my soul.

I hear and obey, and my soul is set free
To follow my Saviour and King.
I cherish His Word deeply hid in my heart;
Rejoicing, His praises I sing.

O Lord, let my heart in Thy statutes be sound;
Thy law is my joy and delight.
Incline now the heart of Thy servant, I pray,
To ponder therein day and night.

'Tis better than thousands of silver and gold,
More precious than rubies can be
To sit at the feet of my Master Divine
And hear when He speaketh to me.

No man in this world has a right to all his rights.

God Will Not Take Second Place

A CHILD knelt by her little bed and prayed, ending her prayer thus: "Dear God, I love You next to Mother, Father, Brother and Sister. I love You next best." Next! What a stumblingblock that word can be. Do we love God first or do we love Him next? It is so easy to love God "next" to our kin, next to our possessions, next to our thoughts, and, yes, even next to loving Self.

To our Heavenly Father we are indebted for all we have and are. We owe Him for all the blessings which richly surround us and which we daily enjoy. His bountiful storehouse and mighty reservoir of Truth is at our disposal and from its inexhaustible source we may draw to our heart's content. If our minds, our hands, our feet and our all, are pliant to His will, we can make ourselves over into new creatures. Then only, can the desire to live eternally, which is implanted deep in the heart of the new man, be realized. If we are measuring up to His high standard, worthy to become kings and priests, God promises us eternal life and first place in His Kingdom. To such a wonderful Creator should we not give of our best, give Him first place in our lives?

In our daily life we show what place we have reserved for God in our hearts. We show by our actions whether we are giving Him first or second place. In every circumstance, in every incident, no matter how petty the trifle or small the detail, we show where our affections lie. Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Knowing that God will not take second place, we must have our faith anchored and riveted upon Him to whom we have pledged even our whole life. We must be unmovable as the mountains and as steadfast as the seasons. Our eye must be fixed and our thoughts unwavering. If thinking constructively, we will act accordingly. For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. We dare not be unstable, one moment scaling the heights of joyful praise, giving God first place, and a moment later trudging downward in the paths of despair, automatically giving God second place in our hearts. We cannot afford to be swayed this way and that, much like the fall and rise of the barometer that registers every atmospheric condition.

With our feet planted firmly upon the solid Rock of God's everlasting Word, nothing under the heavens can move us from our purpose. Clouds of depression will not sweep away our sunshine; the pressure of temporal cares will not smother the little acts of kindnesses to others; the gales of adversity will not cause us to register bitterness and disappointment; the balmy breezes of prosperity will not make us proud and self-centered. And though the waves and breakers of trial and afflictions beat high upon our shore, our temperature must not drop to a discouraging low level and, above all, never to the freezing point. No, none of these changes should affect us. We must weather every storm that comes our way, for it is late in the day and God will not take second place.



The best way to get rid of a bad habit is to DROP it.

A GRUDGE IS TOO HEAVY A LOAD FOR ANYONE TO CARRY.

Tomorrow

Lord, what am I, that, with unceasing care,
 Thou didst seek after me, that
 Thou didst wait,
 Wet with unhealthy dews, before my gate,
 And pass the gloomy nights of
 winter there?
 Oh, strange delusion! that I did not greet
 Thy blest approach, and oh, to
 Zion how lost,
 If my ingratitude's unkindly frost
 Has chilled the bleeding wounds
 upon Thy feet.
 How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
 "Soul, from thy casement look,
 and thou shalt see
 How He persists to knock and
 wait for thee!"
 And, oh! how often to that voice of sorrow,
 "Tomorrow we will open," I replied.
 And when the morrow came I answered still,
 "Tomorrow."



When did you have the last spiritual housecleaning?

Being good is not enough. Be good for something.

How Do You Clean House?

THE ANCIENT cliff-dwellers of Arizona had a queer way of cleaning house: The smoke of their fires filled their odd stone dwellings and covered their walls with a black layer of soot.

When this became intolerable, they did not wash or scrape it off, but calmly went to work and plastered over it a fresh coat of white mortar. Investigators have found no less than eleven such coats of soot and mortar, one above the other—eleven housecleaning days, no one knows how many springs apart.

We smile; but those that live in precisely such houses should not throw stones.

I do not mean to say that our spring housecleanings are conducted in just this fashion.

But what I do refer to is the way many of us clean house in our souls. Instead of making a thorough job of it, rubbing and scraping and digging and washing until every least fault and every familiar sin is removed and carted to the dump, we whitewash ourselves just as we are.

The whitewash is made of self-justification and hypocrisy, conceit and deceit, and it leaves the sootiest soul a fine, glaring white. But scratch it anywhere, and—faugh! the black underneath!

Some day, under the fierce sun of God's anger, all this whitewash will peel off, and such soul-rooms will be black, black, nothing but black, and black forever.

The prophet Ezekiel forecast doom for those who daubed with untempered mortar. And instead of saving face the Word teaches the necessity of washing thoroughly that we may be thoroughly cleansed from iniquity.

Conscience is a safe guide only when God is the guide of the conscience.



If you would get the best out of life, see that it gets your best.

The emptier the pot, the quicker it boils. WATCH YOUR TEMPER.

When religion does something for you, it makes you do something for somebody else.

Self-discipline is one of the foundation stones of character.

Have you a Mental Bank Book with kind deeds, a clear conscience, a pure heart, brave living and unselfish giving credited to your account?



Goodness is the only investment that never fails.

"Haven't Got Time"

Opportunity knocked at the door
 With a chance for a brother within;
 He rapped till his fingers were sore,
 And muttered, "Come on, let me in,
 Here is something I know you can do,
 Here's a hill I know you can climb."
 But the brother inside very quickly replied:
 "Old fellow, I haven't got time."

Opportunity wandered along
 In search of a man who would rise.
 He said to the indolent throng:
 "Here's a chance for the fellow who tries."
 But each of them said with a smile:
 "I would—but I'm busy today,
 Very busy today, and I'm sorry to say
 That I really haven't got time."

At last Opportunity came
 To a man who was burdened with cares,
 And said: "I now offer the same
 Opportunity that has been theirs.
 Here's a duty that ought to be done,
 It's a chance if you've got time to take it."
 Said the man, with a grin, "Come along, pass it in!
 I'll either find time or I'll make it."

Of all the excuses there are
 By which this old world is accursed,
 This "Haven't got time" is by far
 The poorest, the feeblest, the worst.
 A delusion it is, and a snare;
 If the habit is yours you should shake it.
 For if you want to do what is offered to you,
 You'll find time to do it, or make it.

— In Training —

THE STRICT discipline, severe physical tests, and four long years of schooling young men who wish to be officers in the Navy are called upon to pass through, impressed the writer, as to what rigors ambitious aspirants to recognition and distinction will endure.

There are many hundreds who are appointed as candidates who do not survive the preliminary mental examinations, and many more are eliminated by severe physical tests.

The candidate who is accepted is given a pamphlet of thirty-eight finely typed pages giving detailed instructions, covering virtually every moment of his life from that time on. He will be here for four years and is expected to live a life of rigid discipline, such as is seldom found anywhere outside religious monasteries.

My mind then turned to the narrow way which we have chosen. We have all enlisted in the army of the King and agreed to fight His royal battles against sin and evil as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

We have seen many start in this way of life, who, after their first examination, dropped out because they could not mentally grasp the beauty of the truth in all its brilliancy. As the Apostle told us, "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Jesus told us "many are called, but few are chosen." Also few there be that find the narrow way which leads to life. Why are there few? Because the way is so narrow and strait that there are only few who will endure the discipline and serve the Lord with all their mind, might and strength.

The Navy cadet is willing to endure rigid discipline for four years in order to get a position as an officer, and then he may never reach the expected pleasure, joy, and honor for which he has labored so hard; for this life is so uncertain. Accident, sickness and even death may grasp him with its cold hand. What good then will four years of training do?

How different is our spiritual training. We are called upon to take up our cross and follow Jesus; and if we endure unto the end, we shall be saved. There will be no disappointment, for the reward is sure, and we have the promise of this life in which to do the work.

The first day the freshman receives his uniform and necessary equipment; a minimum pay check, plus board and lodging, has already started. Deductions are taken from his salary each month to pay for his uniform, etc., and a sum of around \$900.00 will be ready for him upon graduation.

Has not God been as just as man? Did He not tell us to put on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil? He furnishes us with truth with which to gird ourselves, the breastplate of righteousness, the gospel of peace for sandals, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation—a complete outfit, to be sure; and then the fine linen clean and white. We must be preparing all through our training so that at graduation our garments will be clean and spotless, free from all sin.

He also told us He would give us an hundredfold in this

life, and in the future, life without end, full of riches, honor, dominion, power, joy and peace that can never be marred.

These men while in training live in the largest dormitory in the world under one roof. All rooms are exactly alike, with the same place in each for his possessions. Unless everything is precisely in that place, the demerits begin to pile up. Two men to a room. For each a narrow bed, and over it a shelf to hold books and magazines with a proper place for each on that shelf. If the inspector finds one book misplaced—demerits. All his other possessions must be kept in the same orderly manner. He is allowed no civilian clothing.

Does God require less of us? No. "Let all things be done decently and in order," and if we do not, our demerits will begin to pile up.

As the midshipman is not allowed civilian clothing, it brings to mind what Isaiah the prophet said, "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord . . . that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin." Paul also admonishes us to "make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof."

These men are regarded simply as robots. Whenever they move through the corridors, it must be straight down the middle, as if on parade; eyes straight to the front. He can not give recognition to friends or classmates. His only chance to relax is during the little while he spends in his room with his mate.

As the men in training have to walk just so down the corridors, so we must walk in the strait and narrow way. The Wise Man tells us: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away. . . . Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil."

The student can not give recognition to friends or classmates. Neither should we show any recognition to the "old man." If we always pass him by and give no notice to him he will soon decide to stay out of sight. The student has a chance to relax in his room; but we must never relax, for if we do, just so surely will some evil way be ready to enter.

The day begins at 6:30 A. M., and 40 seconds after the first bugle note every door must be opened. Twenty-five minutes are allowed for dressing. At 6:55 comes the call for breakfast formation. At this formation the officer of each company reads the daily conduct report, calling dire attention to misdeeds, and the companies march to the mess hall.

Do we realize that our daily conduct report is being read by someone greater than a Navy officer, and we have someone who will call our attention to our misdeeds? Do we pay attention to these kind warnings while we have time and opportunity?

At meal time these men must sit stiffly upright, using the smallest possible part of a chair—generally not more than two or three inches from the edge. They may not speak unless spoken to, which often is in the form of

questions by First Class Men. If he does not know the answer he must get it by next meal time and be prepared to offer it at a nod from his superior.

If we were called upon to pass through this form of discipline, I am sure many of us would consider the way too hard. But men will endure this for four long years in order to gain a position that will bring good wages, honor, and station in this life. Our reward would be a thousand times greater even if we did have to submit to this discipline. But God has not seen fit to deny us any good thing; but permits us to have so many comforts and blessings: an hundredfold in this life and in the future, if only faithful, more than eye hath seen or ear heard.

The one unpardonable sin in the Academy is dishonesty. A lad caught cheating or lying is shipped off home within twelve hours and his naval career ended forthwith.

God despises dishonesty just as much as does the naval officer, and the sweet Psalmist of Israel wrote, "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." God will not permit a dishonest man to live in His presence; so, brethren, let us work as never before to put all evil, dishonesty, deceit, and everything that is contrary to God's law far away so that we may enjoy a peaceful career that can never be marred by sorrow, pain, or death; even life through the never ending ages of eternity.

HAMMERS

Noise of hammers once I heard
Many hammers, busy hammers,
Beating, shaping, night and day,
Shaping, beating dust and clay
To a palace, saw it reared,
Saw the hammers laid away.

And I listened, and I heard
Hammers beating, night and day.
In the palace newly reared
Beating it to dust and clay.
Other hammers, muffled hammers,
Silent hammers of decay.

When "The Plowman Shall Overtake the Reaper"

(Continued from page 5)

unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which have come out of [after or beyond,] great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." It is noticeable here that while the firstfruits reign, or sit on the throne, with Christ (Rev. 3:21, the great numberless afterfruits stand "before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Quality and Quantity Blossoms

EVERY AMBITIOUS gardener is interested in growing quality and quantity produce. There is a simple but striking method which a grower of sweet peas practiced and which helped to produce these desirable qualities.

Every spring this gardener grew long rows of sweet peas, yielding literally thousands of beautiful blossoms of every shade and hue. Daily he picked his blossoms giving the fresh, fragrant, and sunny bouquets to his many friends and neighbors. His usual comment was, "There will be more tomorrow." He found that by stripping his vines daily, they produced more and better blossoms. When they were not picked daily, they soon ceased to grow in such profusion. The stems became short, the flowers dwarfed, and they were less in number.

Thus, along with their fragrance and beauty, the sweet peas furnish food for thought. The production of quality and quantity blossoms through sharing is true also of spiritual blossoms. Indeed the one who never gives, or who holds off his giving for some better time, will soon forget how to share. The virtue of giving will never grow.

Have you noticed that the more cheerfulness we give away each day, the more there is the next day? The more words of courage that we express to one another, the stronger our own courage becomes. By daily showing courage in doing right, the greater our store of courage to face larger problems grows.

In this busy world, with so many matters calling for our attention, it is easy to let the blossoms of kindness wither and droop. We must daily strive to "show kindness first at home" and it will overflow to all around us. Only by so doing will we produce that quality and quantity acceptable to our Heavenly Father.

Another high quality that is desired by and pleasing to God is *high quality* conversation. Peter calls it holy conversation. The more of these choice blooms we give to our friends today, the more blossoms will open for tomorrow's giving! If we *daily* practice to speak righteousness, bestowing it in large bouquets to those about us, our hearts will become spiritually enlarged and like David's, will be "bubbling over" with the things touching the king.

In specializing in quantity and quality blossoms it might be said, as has been said of radiating joy: "The very society of joy redoubles it; so that, while it lights upon my friend it rebounds upon myself, and the brighter the candle burns the more easily will it light mine."

Perhaps we are cultivating fine spiritual plants, locked up in our hearts, but they will never become quality or quantity blossoms unless others are able to enjoy their beauty and sweet fragrance.

And when in sweet profusion,
Every virtue in full bloom,
We'll find that in the Kingdom
There'll be abundant room.

• • •

A Malayan Proverb says, "One can pay back the loan of gold, but one dies forever in debt to those who are kind and merciful."

Meditations

On the Word

"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Proverbs 11: 25.)

About a century ago a certain man wrote: "One always receiving, never giving, is like a stagnant pool, in which whatever flows remains, whatever remains corrupts." From our Heavenly Father we have received an abundance of temporal and spiritual blessings; far more than we deserve and exceedingly above what we can number. Were we never to share our possessions with others who are less fortunate, it would indeed reveal our ungratefulness.

Although it is a virtue to help those in need of temporal things, yet far more essential it is to help mankind learn the way of salvation. What the world about us lacks is not so much material things but the spiritual; not things for this life alone but faith in God and His Word and an understanding of its teachings. It needs to practice the moral virtues taught by the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles.

In proportion as we help in this service to mankind, our souls will be made fat, or "enriched," as a late translation reads. A person who possesses more earthly wealth than his own needs require, feels a greater satisfaction in using it to benefit mankind than merely hoarding it to satisfy his greed. All we have belongs to God, and we are His stewards. Possessions are given to prove and train us for the greater work God has for us if faithful. If we use our goods with the thought in mind that they are the Lord's, then we will use them with care. We shall possess an inward peace and contentment which comes with an assurance that we are sincerely doing what God requires. And though temporal things shall pass away, the deeds done for the Lord will stand to our eternal credit.

It is not by wealth alone that we can be of service to our fellow men. Time and ability are two great elements which people can use to help others, and thus greatly enrich their own souls. Naturally people look at their personal affairs first with little, if any, thought for others. It was the apostle Paul, who, after having spent the most of his life in the service of the Lord to help his fellow men, said, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2: 4). The few occasional days, hours, or even minutes spent to assist others in the way of salvation are by no means wasted. Did not others help us? Is it not because others have labored that we enjoy the spiritual blessings which we possess? Left to ourselves we should still be wandering in the wilderness of the thinkings of man, and struggling in the mire of our own selfish interests and lusts.

The great characters we read of in the Bible who were always busy aiding others, were undoubtedly well aware that in this way they kept themselves full of faith and in favor with God. The apostles who took active part in the great missionary work after the ascension of their Master, while preaching the way of life, applied to themselves those same lessons which they taught to others. "I keep under my body," said Paul, "and bring it into subjection:

lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (I Cor. 9: 27). He wanted to be sure of his own salvation. Likewise the apostle John revealed that they all applied the gospel to themselves as well as preaching it to others. He said, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward" (II John 8).

The years of experience the apostles had in proclaiming the Word of God to the world enriched their own knowledge of it. Their earnest endeavor to persuade men to obey as well as believe the gospel, of necessity developed in them a perfect understanding of all practical principles which the Law of God demanded of believers. Furthermore, they had to be examples before the world to whom they proclaimed the Word. They had to demonstrate to them the power of the gospel; that it could turn ordinary men, sinners, or heathen, regardless of race or rank, to new creatures in Christ. They followed the example of Christ and left their lives as examples for their hearers to follow. We can truly say of them that while giving their all in service for others their own lives were enriched, and while watering others—giving them the water of life—they themselves were watered.

No one can live a selfish life and be accepted by the Almighty. Though our chief concern must be to save ourselves, still we must always be helping others to this same end. This help may be in the form of material things; often it may be we must send or take the gospel to those hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Again, it may be by exhorting one another to godliness as well as reproving the erring ones. By every act of assistance we ourselves are strengthened to better living.

As we receive the many blessings may it be our desire to share them with others, that in the Day of Judgment it may be said to us, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you . . . for I was ahungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me" (Matt. 25: 34—36). On the other hand, "Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (I John 3: 17). They shall hear the dreadful sentence and there will be no appeal: "Depart from me, ye cursed, . . . for I was hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, I was a stranger and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not" (Matt. 25: 41—43).

Our strength may be feeble, our talents few, but there is some little thing we can do. Though it may seem most insignificant, yet it may greatly benefit someone; but above all, we will be using our "talent" and will be strengthening ourselves by doing it.

Many times we shall experience that by helping others our own burden will grow lighter.

"My burden is too heavy, Lord," I trembling said.

"I can no further carry it!" and tears I shed.

Then came a sudden cry for help from one sore pressed;
I ran to seek him, gladly gave him of my best.

Then thought I of my heavy burden—but, lo, 'twas gone!

The gloom and doubt had vanished quite and love's light shone.

When we another's burden lift or try to bear,

Love's gentle hand removeth swift our load of care."

Questions and Answers



"We should like to be cleared up on the subject of resurrections: how many, they begin how and when? In what state are we to be resurrected, mortal or immortal?"

How many *resurrections*? There will be two, the resurrection of all the deceased covenant-makers from the time Adam was placed on probation until the last person to enter God's service and compete for the prize of immortal life to be bestowed *at Christ's coming*. From among these will be chosen the "firstfruits unto God and the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4). Then will follow the Millennial Age, when a "great multitude which no man [can] number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," shall live, work out their salvation, and die; and be raised again at the close of the Millennium. They will be the "rest of the dead" of Rev. 20:7, who are not to live again until the thousand years are expired.

These resurrections *begin how and when*? With the return of Christ from heaven. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (before the living are caught away to meet the Lord in the air). "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:15-17). If the dead are to meet the Lord in the air at His arrival from heaven, they will of necessity have been already resurrected. This work will be delegated to His forerunner, the prophet Elijah (Mal. 4:5; Matt. 17:11). This arrangement is revealed in the statement, "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God."

In what state are we to be resurrected, mortal, or immortal?

Reason would teach that we should be resurrected mortal, for the Scriptures often repeat that the resurrection is to include both "the just and the unjust" (see Acts 24:15; Dan. 12:2; John 5:29). If the unjust came forth immortal from their graves, then such men as Cain, Judas, and Solomon could never die, hence would have to suffer eternal torment or remorse. Neither of these positions are Scriptural.

The resurrection simply places the dead on a level with the living, that together they may be judged and rewarded according to their works: the faithful granted immortality; the unfaithful to suffer the second death.

Hosea 6:2 makes plain the point. First comes the revival (Heb., *chayah*, "to make alive"); then the raising or exaltation to immortality (Heb., *qum* "to endure, to remain," Dan. 2:44), depending upon individual merit. Also I Cor. 15 likens the resurrection to the sowing of seed. After the seed is sown or cast out from the farmer's hand, only a portion germinates. So in the resurrection, only a portion of those who are cast out of their graves shall be raised to immortality. "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable" (v. 42, R. S. V.). (See article "So also is the Resurrection of the Dead," Megiddo Message, Dec. 12, 1959).

"When Christ returns as ruling King will there be any

mortal beings inhabiting the earth?"

Yes, there will be. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." The phrase, the "kindreds of the earth" suggests mortal beings, the fact that they shall *wail* because of Him proves they will be mortal beings. Immortal beings do not wail, for them all sorrow and tears will have been permanently wiped away (Rev. 21:4). Christ's return to earth is imminent. He will come as a real person, the human family will be here *en masse* as we see it today. Some among them will receive Him and will thus be caused to rejoice, others will choose to reject Him hence will incur His displeasure and judgments, and that is what will induce the wailing.

In the great test of Baal's prophets on Mount Carmel when Elijah challenged them to prove whose was the true God, where did he get the twelve barrels of water? Was it not a dire famine throughout all the land?

The incident is related in I Kings 18. Verse 2 terms it a "sore famine." Mount Carmel, however, was geographically situated very near the Mediterranean coast line, in the Northwestern corner of Samaria on some maps. It was from the Mediterranean then, that Elijah's helpers brought the water. It, being salty, was undrinkable for man or beast but suitable for their use to soak the wood for the sacrifice, making the demonstration most convincing.

How would you explain II Cor. 5: 6-8, about being "Absent from the body, present with the Lord"?

II Corinthians 5: 6, 7 reads: "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight)." The two things under consideration are, that we are now in this body of mortality and we long for the change to the immortal state, to be clothed upon with our house which is coming from heaven. We do not possess this immortal state now, for, as Paul testified, "we walk by faith, not by sight." So long as we are in this mortal state—in this body of mortality—we are absent from the Lord; that is, we cannot enter the Kingdom of God in this, our mortal condition. (I Cor. 15: 50-54).

But by stating that while at home in the body he was absent from the Lord, Paul didn't mean to infer that at death the intellectual part of his being would go at once to be with the Lord. That belief is theology, not Bible teaching. Paul spoke very definitely about his hope in II Tim. 4: 7, 8: "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." As Paul fell asleep in death he did not expect his reward would follow immediately. The righteous Judge would give him his reward "at that day," some future day, the day of Christ's *appearing*, for only then can any mortal hope to be present with the Lord."

O Thou Eternal

...
"O thou Eternal, throned for ever, from age to
age thy fame endures;
Thou wilt rise to have pity on Sion--
'Tis time, 'tis time to favor her;

Her scattered stones are dear to thy servants,
and they are distressed at the dust of her ruins.

When the Eternal builds up Sion,
appearing in his majesty, when he turns to
the forlorn, despising not their prayer, then
pagans will revere thee, all kings on earth will
own thy majesty.

When the Eternal bends from his sacred height,
and looks from heaven to earth, to hear the
prisoner's groan, and to release the doomed;
let this be set down for future generations,
that people yet unborn may praise the Eternal,
Rehearsing his fame in Sion and praising him
at Jerusalem,
When realms and nations gather there to worship
the Eternal.

Thou didst found the earth of old,
the heavens are the work of thy hands;

...
Thy years shall never end;
and in thy presence live thy servants' children,
and their posterity perpetually."

Psalm 102, Moffatt's Trans.



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